



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

San Diego Public Library

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
REVISED--Friday, January 21, 2011

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KPBS & San Diego Public Library Welcome Author Lê Thi Diem Thúy *Library Kick-off Event for "One Book, One San Diego" Reading Campaign*

San Diego, CA...Lê Thi Diem Thúy, author of the best-selling critically acclaimed novel *The Gangster We Are All Looking For*, will appear at the San Diego Public Library venues on **Wednesday, February 2, 2011** for two signature events, kicking-off five months of public programs.

- **Meet the Author: 1:30 p.m.** at the Linda Vista Branch Library (2160 Ulric St.), the author's childhood library, for an intimate "meet & greet" in the community where she grew up.
- **Author Talk: 6:30 p.m.** at the Central Library (downtown, at 820 E St.), where she will sign, discuss and read from her award-winning novel.

Fittingly, this Vietnamese American daughter of San Diego returns to her hometown during the period of Tet, the Vietnamese New Year marking the arrival of spring and joyous celebrations throughout the city. These events are free and open to the public.

The Gangster We Are All Looking For was selected as this year's title for the *One Book One San Diego* program through a public online vote. Entering its fifth year, *One Book* is designed to have all San Diego read the same book at the same time—creating, in effect, a citywide book club. KPBS and San Diego Public Library are partnering on *One Book*, which promotes reading as a source of pleasure and enrichment and engages the community in dialogue promoting tolerance and understanding about differing points of view.

A true-life novel, *The Gangster We Are All Looking For*, is about a Vietnamese refugee family in San Diego, told from the perspective of the family's daughter, who is just six years old when they arrive. The narrator and her parents struggle to adapt to life in an unfamiliar land, while simultaneously dealing with a troubled marriage, a father's mysterious past, and the loss of a brother, in this painful, magical, and poetic novel.

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The Gangster We Are All Looking For is widely held in the library's collection. Library cardholders can reserve the book through the library catalog to have one sent to a San Diego Public Library branch. Copies can also be picked up in person at the Central Library at the branches. The library has also created "Book Club in a Bag," containing 10 copies of *The Gangster We Are All Looking For*, discussion guides and resources for book clubs.

In 1978, Lê Thi Diem Thúy left Vietnam by boat, eventually settling in San Diego. She grew up in the Linda Vista area and at one time wrote for the *Union-Tribune*. "I look forward to taking the book back to the city where my life in America began," she said. "It was in the public libraries of San Diego that I learned to love being in the company of books, and experienced both the consolation of words, and their power to challenge and transport." Lê is currently a Radcliffe Fellow and resides in western Massachusetts.

On January 11, the San Diego City Council passed a resolution declaring January 2011 "ONE BOOK ONE SAN DIEGO MONTH" in the City of San Diego. The resolution, presented by Mayor Jerry Sanders and Council President Tony Young, recognized this award-winning book along with the San Diego Public Library and KPBS for their efforts to "promote an appreciation for reading and encouraging discussions about books and important community issues."

The Library is hosting other presentations, lectures, films, and discussions based on themes found in *The Gangster We Are All Looking For* throughout the city. Programs of note include:

- ***The Tale of Kieu (Truyện Kiều): 6:30 p.m.*** on Monday, February 16, a talk by Dr. Mariam Lam of UC Riverside, on this 3,254 verse long epic poem, written by Nguyễn Du (1766–1820), and widely regarded as the most significant work of Vietnamese literature
- ***No One Knows about Persian Cats: 6:30 p.m.*** on Wednesday, March 16, a film about freedom and the underground music scene in Iran
- ***Panel Presentation with Immigrant and Refugee Writers: 6:30 p.m.*** on Monday, April 11

Still more *One Book* events are currently being scheduled at various San Diego Public Library locations as well as the facilities of other partner organizations, with more to be scheduled during the *One Book* period ending in May. Please check www.sandiegolibrary.org or www.kpbs.org/onebook for the most up-to-date schedule.

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